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determining response procedures in accordance with said acquired status;

determining a response addressee depending upon said acquired status;

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preparing response information in accordance with said determined response procedures; and

outputting said prepared response information to said determined response addressee in accordance with said determined response procedures.

#### REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-24, 26-75, and 77-106 are pending in the present application, with Claims 1, 19, 38, 44, 52, 70, 89, 95 and 103-106 being independent. Claims 1, 19, 52, 70, 103 and 104 have been amended. Claims 25 and 76 have been canceled.

Claims 1-6, 12-15, 19, 20, 23-25, 27, 32-37, 52-57, 63-66, 70, 71, 74-76, 78, 83-88, 103, and 104 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Morgan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,220,674). Claims 7-9 and 58-60 have been rejected as being obvious over Morgan in view of Kageyama et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,625,757). Claims 10, 11, 16, 18, 61, 62, 67, and 69

have been rejected as being obvious over Morgan in view of Wernikoff et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,751,582). Claims 21, 22, 26, 28-31, 38-51, 72, 73, 77, 79-82, 89-102, 105, and 106 have been rejected as being obvious over Morgan in view of Hayshi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,485,246).

Claims 1, 52 and 103

Amended independent Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, response information preparation means for preparing response information for a response medium in text form by combining a message corresponding to the determined response content with an opening or closing phrase that is characteristic of the response medium. None of the cited references, alone or in combination, disclose at least this claimed feature.

Morgan, which is cited in the Official Action in this regard, describes a local area print server which informs the other components of the digital data process of the status of the printing system. Col. 3, lines 16-25. As conceded in the Official Action, Morgan does not disclose a response information preparation means. It seems to be suggested in the Official Action that some sort of information preparation means is inherent in Morgan. However, nowhere does Morgan describe or suggest preparing response information for a response medium in

text form by combining a message corresponding to the determined response content with an opening or closing phrase that is characteristic of the response medium, as recited in amended Claim 1. Nor would one of ordinary skill in the art deem such a feature to be either inherent in Morgan or obvious.

The remaining cited references, Hayashi, Kageyama and Wernikoff, do not remedy the failure of Morgan to describe or suggest this claimed feature. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is allowable. Claim 52 is a method and Claim 103 is a storage medium directed to similar subject matter as Claim 1, and therefore, these claims also are allowable for the reasons discussed above.

Claim 19, 70 and 104

Amended Claim 19 recites, *inter alia*, response addressee determination means for determining a response addressee depending upon the acquired status. None of the cited references, alone or in combination, disclose at least this claimed feature.

To the contrary, Morgan merely discloses a local area print server that provides resources the printing system may need and informs other components of the data processing system of the status of the printing system. Nowhere does Morgan disclose or

suggest determining a response addressee that depends upon acquired status, as recited in amended Claim 19.

The remaining cited references, Hayashi, Kageyama and Wernikoff, do not remedy the failure of Morgan to describe or suggest this claimed feature. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 19 is allowable. Claim 70 is a method and Claim 104 is a storage medium directed to similar subject matter as Claim 19, and therefore, these claims also are allowable for the reasons discussed above.

Claims 38, 89 and 105

Independent Claim 38 recites, *inter alia*, re-response control means. When a response has failed, the re-response control means permits the response procedure determination means to determine re-response procedures and the response information preparation means to prepare re-response information in accordance with the re-response procedures. None of the cited references, alone or in combination, disclose at least this claimed feature.

As conceded in the Official Action, Morgan does not disclose the claimed re-response control means. Fig. 52 of Hayashi is cited in the Official Action as evidence of this claimed feature. However, the cited portion of Hayashi merely

discloses a human sensor that inhibits communication by the unit while an operator is present. The human sensor determines whether communication is to be performed, rather than whether or not a response has failed as a result of outputting the response information, as recited in Claim 38.

The remaining cited references, Kageyama and Wernikoff, do not remedy the failure of Morgan and Hayashi to describe or suggest this claimed feature. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 38 is allowable. Claim 89 is a method and Claim 105 is a storage medium directed to similar subject matter as Claim 38, and therefore, these claims also are allowable for the reasons discussed above.

Claim 44, 95 and 106

Independent Claim 44 recites, inter alia, determination means for employing the status at the response addressee that is acquired by the response addressee status acquisition means to determine whether or not a person at the response addressee is prepared to handle the response.

Claim 44 further recites re-response control means. When the determination means determines that a person is not prepared to handle the response, the re-response control means permits the response procedure determination means to determine

re-response procedures. The re-response control means also permits the response information preparation means to prepare re-response information in accordance with the re-response procedures.

None of the cited references, alone or in combination, discloses these claimed features.

As the Examiner concedes in the Official Action, Morgan fails to disclose the claimed determination means.

Recognizing this failure, the Examiner asserts:

Morgan teaches to send response to a service manager who is a person (See fig. 1). Therefore, the determination means would also have to determine whether the manager is prepared to handle the response or not. Otherwise, it would not make sense to implement the determination means in Morgan's status transferring method in the case of sending [the] status response to the service manager.

Official Action at page 10.

However, the "determination means" referred to by the Examiner, i.e., Hayashi's human sensor, merely detects the presence of an operator. There is no suggestion in Hayashi, Morgan or the combination of these references that the human sensor can determine whether the human standing in front of the copier is prepared to handle a response output. *A fortiori*, there is no suggestion in the combination of these references of

a determination means for employing the status at the response addressee to determine whether or not the response addressee is prepared to handle the response, as recited in Claim 44.

The remaining cited references, Kageyama and Wernikoff, do not remedy the failure of Morgan and Hayashi to describe or suggest these claimed features. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 44 is allowable. Claim 89 is a method and Claim 106 is a storage medium directed to similar subject matter as Claim 44, and therefore, these claims also are allowable for the reasons discussed above.

#### Conclusion

The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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